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Accessing Providers for Co-Occurring Health and Mental Health Disorders for Children and Youth in Ontario

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Children and youth with life-long physical health conditions (e.g., diabetes, asthma, epilepsy) are at an increased risk of developing mental health problems (e.g., anxiety, depression) compared to those without health conditions. While these youth and their family are likely to have already accessed services for their physical conditions, less is known about how these children and youth navigate mental health services. Are they receiving referrals from health specialists, general physicians, and/or other health care providers? My research seeks to understand how visiting a healthcare provider for a physical condition influences mental health service use and the types of mental health providers. I am analyzing data from the 2014 Ontario Child Health Study and Ontario Health Insurance Program billing data to help our understanding of the connection, and disconnection, between physical and mental health service delivery.

(135 words)